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Ninety Years of Service

The Columbia Theological Seminary will complete, this year, ninety years of splendid and efficient service. The work of this famous School of the Prophets is so well known that it scarcely needs the "blazonry" of loud proclamation and yet some judicious estimate of a few of the contributions this institution has made to the life of the Church and of the world will doubtless be welcomed.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SEMINARY.

This historic school originated during that prolific period between 1800 and 1830 when so many denominational colleges and Theological Seminaries were founded in all parts of our country; Andover, New Brunswick, Princeton, Union, Columbia, all were founded during this fruitful era. But the life of the School really dates back further than this. Just as many of the colleges of the country had Theological professors connected with them who taught classes designed to prepare young men for the ministry, so Zion College, located at Winnsboro, founded in 1777, had the Rev. Thomas McCaule as President, who developed quite a number of Presbyterian ministers. His purpose was to have had Winnsboro a duplicate of Princeton College in order to furnish the Church an educated and well equipped ministry.

When the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia prepared to establish a Theological Seminary, the two chief competitors for its location were Zion College at Winnsboro and the University of Georgia at Athens; then under the Presidency of the famous Moses Waddel, for so many years the renowned principal of the Willing-

ton Academy, immortalized in the Georgia Scenes. Dr. Waddel was a prominent educator who also developed quite a number of Presbyterian ministers, as well as statesmen, including John C. Calhoun; and he was anxious that a Theological Seminary should be established in the same region with the University which he had projected. The controversy as to location led to the selection of Columbia, which doubtless was a better choice than either Athens or Winnsboro would have been, for this old South Carolina capital has proven a most hospitable and pleasing environment for this School of the Prophets for nearly a hundred years.

Just as Union Seminary dates its origin back to Moses Hoge's teaching at Hampden-Sidney, so Columbia might well go back for the time of its origin to Thomas Harris McCaule and Zion College. While there is no physical connection yet there is a real substantial and organic one with this older college whose very name has faded from the memories of men. The reason for the founding of Columbia was that the Presbyterians of this great section felt that they must have a Theological Seminary of their own to prepare candidates of their own type and strain for the work of the ministry in their own section.

The splendid and great faith of these fathers has been more than justified by the ninety years of service which this Seminary has rendered, furnishing as it has over a thousand Presbyterian ministers during this period. The names of its first three professors ought never to be forgotten; Thomas Goulding, its virtual founder, was a man of the very highest order of ability and saintliness (his memory is to be perpetuated in a Goulding Professorship authorized by the Synod of Georgia in 1917); George Howe, who had the well-nigh unexampled privilege of serving for fifty-two years as professor in the field of Biblical Literature; and Aaron W. Leland, who was connected with the institution for 38 years and whose splen-

did gifts as preacher as well as teacher are still cherished in the memory of the Church.

The liberal and successful plans of the projectors and founders of this Seminary has been endorsed by three generations of loyal supporters and administrators, and this great section of the Church will never consent to be without a Seminary of its own of the very first order and efficiency in order to satisfy its aspirations and plans.

THE SEMINARY AND MISSIONS.

One of the special features of the life of this School has been, from the beginning, its cordial acceptance of missions as central and masterful in the life of the Seminary, as well as of the Church of which it is a part. Within ten days after the Seminary re-moved to this present site, the Society of Missionary Inquiry was founded which ever since has been influential and dominating in the life of this institution. Out of the first graduating class of six, three offered themselves as missionaries, one of whom was our greatest missionary leader in the Presbyterian Church of the South, J. Leighton Wilson, for many years a pioneer missionary in Africa, where his valuable contributions to science, politics and sociology, as well as to distinctly evangelistic work, were made the matter of comment in British Blue Books. He was recalled from foreign missionary service to become one of the Secretaries of Foreign Missions of the Undivided Presbyterian Church, and afterwards became the first Secretary of Foreign Missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church. It is not extravagant praise to say that no more statesmanlike mind directed the administration of missions in any of the great historic Churches of our country, and the policies which he inaugurated are still controlling his Church. And ever since Wilson's day a stream of missionaries have gone into the mission fields out of the

Seminary classes as they graduated, year by year. The professors, themselves, have been in signal degree and in marked ways connected with missionary service. Charles Colcock Jones, twice professor in the Seminary, left the Institution twice to resume his work as a missionary to the colored race; a man of large fortune, of the highest social standing, of rare scholarship, of fine gifts as a preacher and teacher and sought for in the most distinguished pulpits of his country, he gave himself, with a rare and beautiful self-sacrifice, to labor for the negroes. He was later called to become Secretary of Home Missions for the Presbyterian Church of the whole country, but ill health terminated his useful labors in this field, after three years of successful service. He ought to have a splendid monument erected somewhere as a memorial of his Heavenly and Christ-like spirit and service.

Possessed of the same spirit was John L. Girardeau, who gave himself to work for this lowly race and was, perhaps, the most successful preacher to the colored people that our country ever had in it, ministering to thousands of them Sabbath by Sabbath in a great Church built especially for him in Charleston. When the war terminated of necessity his labors for them, he became an eloquent pastor of one of the Charleston Presbyterian Churches, and later was transferred to Columbia Seminary as Professor of Theology in the Chair of Thornwell. Still another professor, John B. Adger, after many years of successful service as a missionary in Syria, became a professor in this Institution and imparted the missionary flavor, not only to his classes, but to the entire life of the School. One of our present professors, the Rev. James O. Reavis, after service as Secretary of Foreign Missions of our General Assembly, is continuing the traditions of the School by teaching the subject of home and

foreign missions in the Seminary and infusing this temper of Evangelism and missions into the life of the Seminary.

Hundreds of the graduates of the Seminary have rendered most valuable service as pioneer home missionaries and Evangelists in our own land, and it is fitting that the Secretary of Home Missions, our greatest ecclesiastical authority in this field, should be S. L. Morris, one of our most useful and efficient graduates. The Church need never fear that the Seminary, with such a missionary history and spirit and traditions, can fail to produce the fruit amongst its students and graduates of volunteers for missions both at home and abroad.

THE SEMINARY AND ITS FINANCES.

One of the most interesting features of the life of the Institution has been its financial history. It accumulated, prior to the Civil War, an endowment of \$180,000 which was reduced by convulsions incident to that period to \$70,000; only \$3,000 of which yielded any income; but one of the most prosperous epochs in the life of the Seminary followed in which it was sustained by contributions generously made for its support. These contributions came from South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee and illustrates one of the features of this School, which still continues. The present endowment of the Institution is \$270,000. The reasons why the endowment is not still larger are, first, that the School has always pursued a generous policy in relation to the general educational interests of the Church. In illustration, note the following letter from the Rev. A. C. Bridgman, Secretary of the Campaign in South Carolina for the endowment of its Educational Institutions:

“September 19th, 1918.

Dear Dr. Whaling:

In the revival that has come to the Educational work of our Churches in South Carolina, Columbia Seminary has played a leading and munificent part. Dr. McPheeters was the leading spirit, especially in the organization of the joint canvass, beginning about seven and a half years ago. Later when you came to the Seminary, as President, you gave yourself heartily and helpfully to our plans. The other members of the faculty also rendered valuable assistance in the canvass.

At the time of the canvass our men's college at Clinton was in hard financial straits and the Seminary very graciously came forward and advanced the *pro rata* share of the expenses that fell to the college.

By reason of the greater need of the college it was agreed that one-half of the amount raised should go to it, and further that should individual subscribers express a preference in favor of the college, that the preference should be honored in the distribution of the funds. The Seminary very readily and heartily agreed to this plan, when it might have contended for one-third of the proceeds.

There is another fact connected with the canvass that ought not to be overlooked, and that is that the Seminary provided headquarters for the canvass, including an office for the conduct of the work, and also living quarters for myself and family.

May I say that I have never enjoyed working with a body of men who were more interested, more willing and self-sacrificing and more harmonious in their thought and action than the Joint Committee, one third of whose membership was made up of the President of the Seminary and two of its Board of Trustees. I feel that you are to be congratulated upon the splendid record you have made in the face of many difficulties during the time you

have been at the head of the Institution, and I should be glad indeed to see a part, or all, of the Synods that formerly were supporters of Clarksville, ally themselves with Columbia Seminary and co-operate with you and other Synods in making it a yet stronger and more fruitful Institution of our Church."

In addition to this, the Seminary receives from generous friends throughout its constituency today, as it has always done, contributions in aid of its support, which give it an income of approximately \$5,000 to be added to the interest from endowment funds. It is believed, by the President and Faculty and the Board of Trustees, that the Institution is richer with such contributions given continuously and generously, bringing the contributors closer into relation to the School than it would be if it had an additional endowment of many thousands and cease to rely upon these general contributions. However, its endowment funds are increasing satisfactorily and progressively from year to year, having made a net gain in the last seven years of . The best asset of the Seminary is the loyalty of its constituency and the historic habit which has prevailed from the outset of supplementing its income by aid from all its Synods. Sons and grandsons are now contributing to this School, having learned the practice and acquired the habit from fathers and grandsons, who preceded them.

THE SEMINARY AND THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The history and the origin of the Southern Presbyterian Church is peculiarly associated with the Columbia Theological Seminary. The Theologian and Ecclesiastic whose views were embodied in the deliverances of the First General Assembly, was James Henley Thornwell, the author of the masterly paper adopted by that Assem-

bly in 1861 setting forth to the world the reasons for the distinct existence of our Church. And next to him in influence was Benjamin M. Palmer, the Moderator of the First Assembly and the eloquent expounder of the same ecclesiastical principles. Both of these men were professors in the Columbia Theological Seminary and both of them stood for the distinctive principles which originated the Southern Presbyterian Church. First, the supreme headship of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Kingdom; second, the completeness and absolute sufficiency of the Scriptures as the constitution and textbook of the Church, to which nothing at any time was to be added no matter how exigent might seem the circumstances; third, the spirituality of the Church as the supernatural institute of Redemption, rendering it impossible for such an institution to make political or other deliverances not justified by express statement of the Word of God. The constitution of the new Church, as reflected in the book of Church Order and Rules of Discipline, was written within the walls of Columbia Seminary by a Committee of which John B. Adger was Chairman and his hand penned more of its sections and articles than that of any other man, and the whole structure bears the marks of the Columbia Triumvirate, Thornwell, Palmer, Adger.

This Institution, therefore, in the belief of its friends and administrators, is our most distinctly Southern Presbyterian Seminary, standing as guardian and trustee of the principles which gave birth to our Church and for the maintenance of which its life is given. The ties which bind the Seminary and Church together are vital and organic and both the Seminary and the Church stand for these great truths of the headship of Christ, the sufficiency of the Scriptures and the spirituality of the Kingdom of God.

THE OUTLOOK OF THE SEMINARY.

With this history and stewardship, the whole Church is interested in knowing what the present outlook for the Seminary is and that a spirit of optimism and hope pervades its entire constituency. First, Presbyterianism is more numerous and aggressive in its Synods than ever before, and if 10,000 Presbyterians, ninety years ago, thought they needed a Seminary surely multiplied tens of thousands are still more convinced of this need. Second, an educational revival is sweeping through this whole section, marked by the founding of denominational schools and academies in every one of its Synods. Third, industrial prosperity has come to a degree never known before to this region and this part of the old South which constitutes so largely the heart of our section has "come into its own" at last, economically and industrially. Fourth, the Institution is growing in students, in resources, in the number of its professors and is so well equipped and attractive that candidates from all over the Church insist on enlisting in its student body.

A wide-awake and progressive Columbia Seminary resting on the same foundations which have marked its history for ninety years but more aggressive and stalwart than ever, under the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, is destined to still larger fruits of efficient service in training candidates and in wisely influencing the policies of the Kingdom.

The loyalty of its Synods and constituency today is its strongest earthly asset, while the favor of its Divine Redeemer is the guarantee of its ever increasing usefulness.

